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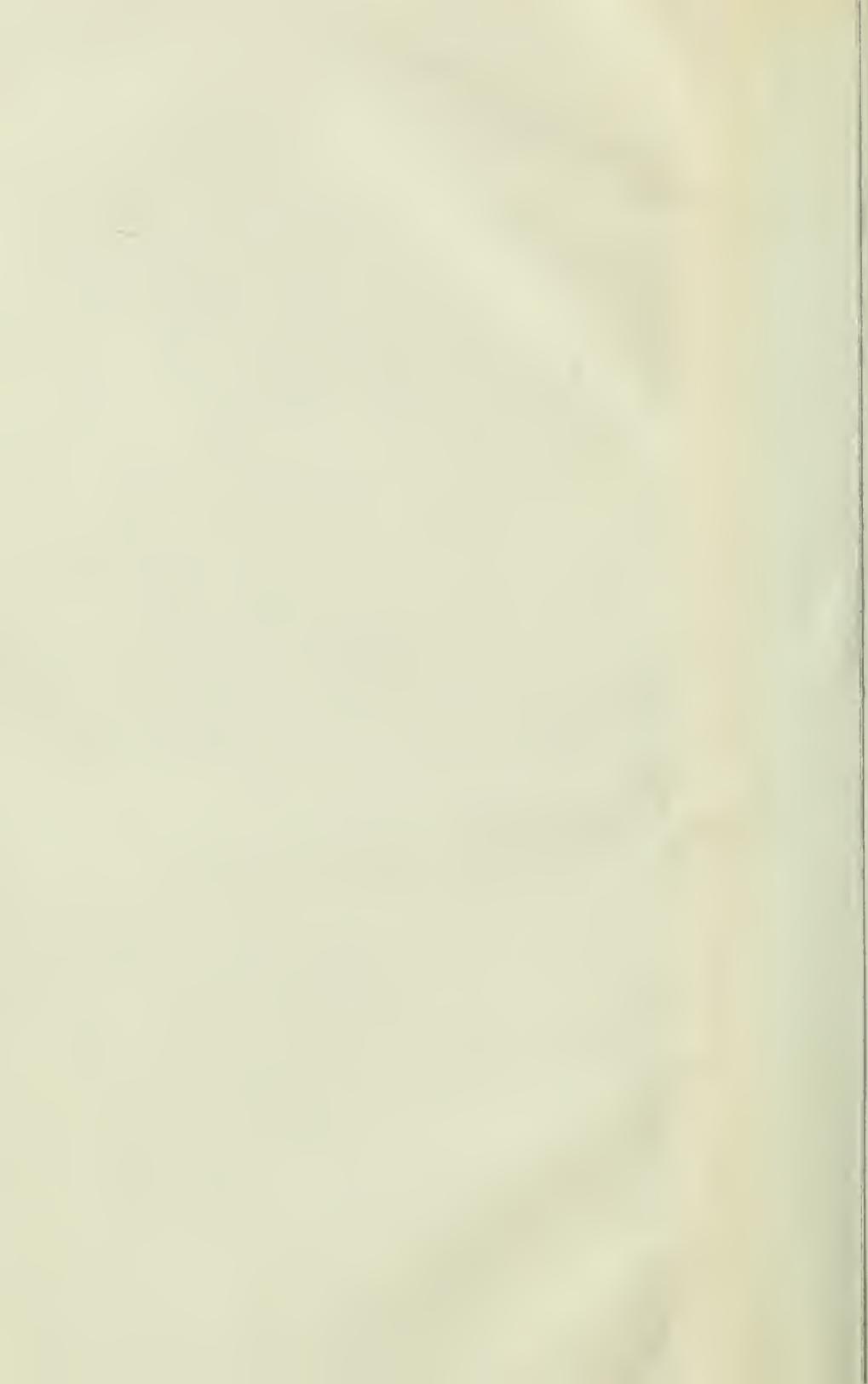
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# DID CHRIST DIE FOR ALL?

BY

WILLIAM ARTHUR, A.M.,

AUTHOR OF "THE TONGUE OF FIRE," "THE SUCCESSFUL MERCHANT," &c.

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## DID CHRIST DIE FOR ALL ?

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MANY pious Ministers, when looking on an assembly to which they are about to preach Christ, doubt whether there is not a portion of those composing it, perhaps a large one, for whom He never died. Many hearers, when listening to a preacher proclaiming that the invitation of the Gospel is for all, think that though so worded it is not so meant. This state of things is not to be looked upon either with levity or anger. It is too serious for the one, too touching for the other. It is the result of earnest teaching on the most sacred of all subjects, the death of our Redeemer, by able and sincere men, well fitted and well worthy to influence their fellows. If their doctrine be scriptural, it will be no weaker for any little opposition we may offer to it; if erroneous, there is in the error a peculiar gloom, which overshadows, though it does not uproot, a considerable range of evangelical truths.

If there is a man living for whom Christ died not, how fearful is his condition ! For him there is no atonement. He stands face to face with pure justice, without Mediator or sacrifice, awaiting, with all his offences on his head, the exact punishment due to a heart at enmity with its Maker, and a life spent in rebelling against Him. For him there is no mercyseat. If ever a desire to say "God be merciful to me" rises in his mind, it is the movement of a false instinct. The mercyseat rests on the tables of eternal law. The innocent might come thither freely ; the guilty must not without atonement, or its shekinah will prove a consuming fire. For him there is no promise. We search the Holy Book in vain for one which can be claimed by sinful men irrespective of an interest in the death of Christ. For him there is no

repentance. He came into the world under the necessity of offending God; he must go on in it without reconciliation, and leave it without hope.

Our present purpose is reverently to approach our Bible, with the solemn question, *Did Christ die for all?* And, O thou Lamb who wast slain—whether for us or not—who standest in the midst of the throne as slain, give us to see, not with our eyes, but with Thine, which are the “spirits of God sent forth into all the earth!”\*

Moses! David! Isaiah! and all ye Prophets of old! which of you was it who declared that He whose redeeming death ye foretold should not bear the iniquities of us all? And ye Evangelists four, whose happy work it was to record His own deeds and words, which of you took down from His lips the announcement, that He would die only for a portion of mankind? And ye Apostles, whose lives were spent in preaching His death and resurrection, which of you proclaimed, which left on record, that He did not suffer for all? As we put these solemn questions, we pause over this mysterious book, which, like a conductor, brings down to us the words of those who are on high. At each pause, the anxious ear rests upon a rejoicing silence.

What! no express and plain statement as a foundation for this despairing doctrine? None. Not one text? No, not one. Did we set down here the sentence Christ did not die for all, we should write what inspired pen has never written.

But if we cannot find the exact words, may we not find some that are equivalent, which, as in other cases, we ought to accept as teaching the doctrine, though not giving the formula? Frame any equivalent, and then interrogate this Book. “He died only for a portion of mankind.” Is that here? Or, “All men, literally, were not included in the atoning benefit of His death.” Or, “He gave Himself for those only who should be saved.” Or, “He offered a sacrifice for those whom He foreknew.” Or, “Some were passed by for whom He did not shed His blood.” Or, “He suffered but for His own.” No, not one of these is in thy pages, blessed Bible, nor any phrase of equal import!

It is not said in so many words, all shall not be saved;

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\* Rev. v. 6.

but we are often told of those who will be saved, and of those who will not. Again and again are we told of those for whom Christ died, but not once of those for whom He died not.

Well do we remember how, when we had first made the discovery that the Book of God had no words to express what we had been carefully taught, we asked the venerated man from whose unambiguous doctrine (not veiled or mystified, like much we now hear) we had learned that Christ did not die for all, for the passage which said so. He quoted as authority, "My blood of the New Testament which is shed for *many*;"—"not," he added, "for *all*." The natural reply was: "By one man's disobedience *many* were made sinners,"—does that mean not all? Is there no clear passage? "He gave Himself for *us*; to redeem *us*;"—"not," he again added, "for all, but for *us* believers." The reply was from the same hand: "He gave Himself for *me*." Did *me* exclude *us*? or us, "not for us only?" This is the best attempt we ourselves remember, and as good a one as can be made, to quote a plain text to prove that Christ did not die for all.

"But is it not clear that He died only for those who will be saved? else He would have died in vain." It is not clear, because it is never said in Scripture. There we are told that He died for "the ungodly," for "the unjust," but never that He died only for those who shall be saved; not even for those who shall be saved, without the "only." No expression of similar turn or import exists in all the Bible.

As to the inference "else He died in vain," it would have force if once hinted in Scripture. The sun does not shine in vain between four and eight o'clock on a summer's morning, although millions of eyes are shut against his light. St. Paul puts a case in which He would have died in vain; namely, had it been possible for us to justify ourselves by our works: "If righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain;" that is, without necessity.

He would also have died in vain if the terms on which He made Himself an atonement were not fulfilled. In the assertion, "If any perish for whom He suffered, then He died in vain," it is *assumed* that the terms on which He offered Himself up were, that all for whom He suffered should be saved. This is a most natural assumption; one that any

of us would probably adopt, if forming our views without direct instruction from our Lord. Does He ever say that this was the condition on which He offered Himself? Does He give any single statement, even any distant hint, that none for whom He suffered should be lost? Not one. But He does clearly state the conditions and terms of His atoning death: "So must the Son of man be lifted up, that *whosoever believeth in Him* should not perish, but have eternal life." This was at the opening of His ministry. When on the point of ascending, He showed that the same was in His view: "Preach the Gospel to every creature; he that believeth shall be saved." Did that fail, He had been "lifted up" in vain; but that will never fail, and, therefore, though "he that believeth not shall be damned," He is not dead in vain. "This is the will of Him that sent Me, that every one which seeth the Son, and *believeth on Him*, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day." Had it been intended that all for whom His atonement was presented must be saved, how natural would it have been in such passages as this, instead of saying every one which believeth, to say every one whose sins He bears, for whom He suffers, or some equivalent expression! And had it been so, is it possible that it should not in a single instance be expressed, while the certain salvation of believers is so constantly set forth?

But while the allegation, "else He died in vain," offers no ground why we should turn from our simple inquiry into the words of Scripture, it does show reason why we should cherish respect for those who advance it. The objection is connected with deep veneration for that atoning death to which we owe all our hopes of mercy; such veneration as shrinks from regarding it in any light that might seem to derogate from its infinite value and power. Such a feeling is to be deeply respected. Did our natural ideas of the probable terms on which the Lord would suffer for any man weigh, it would be on this side; so would also our observation of all we see happening among men. But such reasoning or views may not intrude where manifold and exceedingly plain Scriptures pre-occupy the ground.

"But surely none for whom Christ died can perish." Is it so written? We are told that he that believeth *shall*

*not perish*; that they that have done good shall rise to the resurrection of life. The holy, the sanctified, the faithful, the righteous, those who endure to the end, those who overcome, those whose robes are washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb, those who hear His voice and follow Him, described under every form of words, are spoken of as sure of the kingdom of God. But where is it said that he for whom Christ died shall never perish? that he shall be saved? that he shall infallibly inherit the kingdom of God?

So far from the Scripture saying it is impossible for those to perish for whom the Saviour died, that possibility is put before us in the most pointed and affecting manner. When Paul is urging upon both Romans and Greeks the Christian duty of respect for a brother's conscience, what is his crowning argument? To the Roman, "Destroy not him with thy meat for whom Christ died."\* Was this appeal founded on a fictitious danger? To the Greek he says, "And through thy knowledge *shall* the weak brother *perish, for whom Christ died?*"† Was he conjuring up an impossible case? Peter, telling of false teachers, makes the summit of their heresy to be this,—"even denying the Lord that bought them;" and, so far from regarding them as safe because bought by Him whom they deny, he directly adds, "*and bring upon themselves swift destruction.*"

The opinion that no one can perish for whom Christ died, has the letter of no Scripture for it, and the direct letter of Scripture against it. Therefore, specious reasons, even though founded on a feeling so sacred as veneration for "the precious blood of Christ," crumble under the words of that Book whereby we learn the mystery of the cross. It tells us that He "became the Author of eternal salvation *unto all that obey Him;*" not unto all for whom He died.

We well know that to those who have been trained to believe that none can perish for whom He died, it sounds irreverent to say that they may; as much so as to those trained in the opposite belief, it sounds shocking to say that He commanded redemption to be preached to those whom He never redeemed.

\* Rom. xiv. 15.

† 1 Cor. viii. 11.

In the Scripture we have frequent distinctions made between class and class. The righteous and the wicked, the Jew and the Gentile, the learned and the ignorant, the faithful and the backslider, the saved and the lost, as well as different orders of God's servants, are all spoken of. Do we ever hear of two classes thus distinguished,—they for whom the Saviour did, and they for whom He did not, atone? Had such a classification been correct, none would have been more comprehensive, none more natural to name. Is it conceivable that, if it existed, the Scripture would suppress all mention of it? Where are the saved distinguished from the rest of mankind by this, that they are those for whom Jesus died? Where are those who perish described as they for whom He had not died? Those who do not believe, who are unholy, who resist the Spirit, who deny the Lord, who are servants of Satan, who are lost, are all spoken of; but *where is there any mention, any hint, of those for whom Christ did not die?*

Respecting the proposition, Christ did not die for all, we will only add a few sentences of summary.

1. It is not contained in one express text of the Bible.
2. None of its natural or probable equivalents are found.
3. Mention is never made of any person or class for whom Christ did not die.
4. The loss of souls is never attributed to the fact that He had not died for them.
5. The saved are never described as specially those for whom He died.
6. It implies that God was willing that some should perish, in direct contradiction to His word.
7. It makes the loss of souls to originate in Christ's exclusion of them; whereas the Scripture makes it to result from their rejection of Christ.

Then thou, our troubled brother, across whose soul the dark suggestion passes, "Thou art one of those for whom the Saviour never died," lay thy hand softly on the Holy Book, and say, No word that ever proceeded out of the mouth of God makes mention of men for whom the Saviour did not die.

We now change our question. We do not inquire of wise and good men of the modern, or middle, or even the

early ages, but only of the holy men of old who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. Prophets and Apostles, did any of you ever say that Christ died for all? What a contrast to the silence which met the contrary question! Now it is an outburst and chorus of inspired voices. They utter and repeat the very words, and all their natural equivalents; they use all varieties of expression suited to the sense; they affirm it directly and incidentally; they say it when speaking of what was designed in His death, and when speaking of what was done; they take it as the admitted basis of conclusions they wished to prove; they affirm it often, and imply it times without number.

"All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all." Plain and blessed words of Isaiah! Is it conceivable that, after using "all we" and "every one" in their natural sense, he would in the same breath use "us all" in a reduced one, and that when myriads of souls hung upon the distinction? Our Lord, on the first recorded occasion on which He discoursed of His own mission and death, said, "God so loved the world, that He sent His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Mark! not that whoever He should atone for, die for, suffer for, buy, or any similar term, but that "*whosoever believeth* should not perish." He adds, "*God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world*, but that the world through Him might be saved." What does "world" here mean? When we read that a decree went out from Cæsar Augustus that "*all the world* should be taxed," Cæsar's name shows that the world means Cæsar's world. So in the passage, "God so loved the world," it plainly means God's world. In immediate connection with this first and most Divine announcement of the love of God to the world, our Lord repeats three separate times that faith is the condition of man's inheriting the benefits of this love, and "*whosoever believeth* will not perish. He lays down unbelief and *enmity to the light* as the real cause of men's destruction. Now we certainly may say, that in all this He only meant that God loved part of the world; that Christ was sent for none but these, and that others never could believe; therefore, in

reality, *whosoever* believes will be saved. But is that Divine Gospel ? "That *whosoever believeth* should not perish," is language which must suggest hope to every man ; which lays the blame of any one's perdition on his rejection of Christ ; which never could be addressed, in candour, to those whose believing was foreclosed by Christ's rejection of them.

John, who constantly takes the term "world" to designate that part of our race which lies in wickedness, nevertheless uses the plain, strong, and (if he did not mean it in its natural sense) most delusive language: "He is the propitiation for our sins, and *not for ours only*; but also for the sins of the whole world." He writes, "We have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world." He had heard the Lord say, "My flesh which I will give for the life of the world."

We often see the settled views of a speaker in incidental allusions, more clearly even than in his formal enunciations. Paul, in speaking of the incarnation of Christ, shows that it was in order "that He should taste death,"—he might have stopped there, or said, "for His own," or "for His people," or "for His chosen;" but he, or any other sacred writer, never once used these terms in connection with the Lord's death. After, "that He should taste death," he naturally drops in the words "for every man," as naturally as he would have said, that the temple was open for every Jew. So again, when showing that the Gospel teaches us to live "soberly, righteously, and godly," he calls it "the grace of God which bringeth salvation :" he might have stopped here, or added, "to His people," "to His chosen," or any other limiting term, had such met his views; but he adds, "to all men."\*

When the same Apostle desires to show that all men were dead in sin, he grounds the proof of that truth on another. And what is the uncontested data by which he proved that all were dead ? "We thus judge, that if *One died for all*, then were all dead; and that *He died for all*, that they which live," &c. Does the one "all" in the centre of this clause mean all, and the two "alls" which stand on each side of it mean not all ? No ; for then the Apostle's

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\* Tit. ii. 11, marginal reading.

inference would have no force? No; for a far nobler reason: then inspired words would raise false hope.

As a truth, now unquestioned among Christians, the fall and depravity of all, is proved by Christ's dying for universal man; so also a duty, that of prayer for all men, is based by the same Apostle on the same unquestioned truth. After exhorting us to supplication and intercession for all, he says: "For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour." Why good? why acceptable? Because it is carrying out His own will,—"who will have all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth; for there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a ransom for all." Pray for "all men," because God "will have all men to be saved," and because Christ "gave Himself a ransom for all." Does this, can it by any imaginable turn, mean less than the natural sense of the words? Is it not plain and heaven-like? Does it not assure you and me that Christ gave Himself for us, that the Father wills us to be partakers of salvation, and that there is not a man on the earth for whom we ought not to pray, and that in faith?

Our Lord's commission was, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature." What is preaching the Gospel to *me*? It is saying to me, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and *thou* shalt be saved." To hold that language to one whom Christ never intended to help, who consequently never, never can be saved, would be terribly untrue. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and **THOU SHALT BE SAVED**," clearly opens the door of salvation to me, and tells me if I do not enter in, it is not because Christ shut me out, but because I turn away. To tell me others will be saved, is not good news for *me*; or that many will be saved, or as many as are bought by the Lord's death. Can I be saved? That is the question; and unless you answer it, you do not *proclaim*—authoritatively announce—good news to me. When you say, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and *thou* shalt be saved," you preach Gospel to **ME**. Then this is to be said to **EVERY CREATURE**. Shall we say it without reserve? Shall we feel that it means that because Christ "gave Himself a ransom for all," every man ought to believe in Him, and if he do not is justly

condemned for rejecting the Lord who bought him? Or shall we say it feeling that it means something very different from this, which needs a great deal of explanation?

The whole tenor of the New Testament and the Old is, that the ruin of a soul is against the will of God. St. Peter declares that He "is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." In accordance with this, He commands "all men everywhere to repent;" sends His Gospel to all, and enjoins upon His people prayers and efforts for all. He ever charges home the fault of being separate from Christ upon those who die in that condition and perish. This is too plain to be denied. Is it not too serious to be accounted for on any ground but that it is true—true in the most natural meaning, in the simple sense in which all such charges strike upon the conscience of one to whom they are addressed? "Ye will not:"—the words "will not" here mean "ye are not minded, not disposed, not willing:" this is the undisputed sense. Then, "Ye will not come to Me that ye might have life," is surely the language of one who would freely give them life; not of one who designed to confer it on others, and withhold it from them. Their final separation from Christ originated either with Him or with them. With which? He lays it upon *them*. Had He first shut them out from His atonement, their unbelief would be an act not originating with them, but the natural, the unavoidable fruit of His own act, in rejecting them. For them there was no atonement, no Saviour to believe in. Say not, that when He appeals to them, "Turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways, for why will ye die?" they may irreverently reply, We die because Thou wouldest not die for us. Had He chosen to leave any without the possibility of salvation, it would have been on just and good grounds, quite as much so as those on which He leaves rejectors of Christ to perish; and He would not conceal the one act by appearing to invite all, any more than He has concealed the other by promising to all salvation at last. How clearly and solemnly He always sets out the great ordinance of God,—he that believeth not is condemned; he that believeth not shall be damned! Where He excludes, He does it before the sun, and *declares the grounds*.

"All," "every man," the "world," the "whole world,"

are the terms employed, without any hint once given that a limit should be placed on their signification. It is quite true that such terms may be used, in certain cases, in a popular sense, when the meaning is not universal but limited. To say that all England now visits London, or that all London, on a certain occasion, flocked to see the Queen, misleads no one. But there are cases where universal terms cannot be used in a limited sense without misleading, and where they never would be so used even by mortal and erring speakers. No one could say that all Englishmen are electors; or that any British soldier may become a General on one condition, courage alone. There are cases where a universal term applied in a limited sense is not only misleading, but worse. A known and fixed exclusion makes it in one set of cases incorrect, in another deceptive and cruel. Had the Queen, lately, in India, proclaimed pardon to all rebels and mutineers on submission, when she had resolved that a certain class of them were to be excluded from the benefits of the amnesty, there would have been, besides simple misleading, matter for grave accusation. The offenders generally were to be admitted to mercy, and that was proclaimed. A defined class were to be excepted, and that was stated. Without specifying this exception, the universal declaration of amnesty would, by all the laws of words, have opened the door of mercy to every rebel who submitted and sought forgiveness. The greater the privilege announced, the greater the disaster from which relief is offered, the greater becomes the impossibility of using a universal expression, when you intend to benefit only a selected number. The law of words is something like this: In speaking of an indifferent matter, which does not involve the interest of one party, or the honour of another, universal terms may be used with less than their natural meaning; but this is never the case where interests are involved, and exclusion of some intended, especially if life is at stake. No case of a monarch dealing with subjects, though their all was forfeit, can be compared, as to the interests involved, with that of the Lord's dealing with man. The eternal life of every soul depends on its redemption by Christ. If it had no part in His work, it can have none in promise, or hope, or heaven. Is this then a case in which even mortal speakers would omit

all intimation of a class excepted from the infinite benefit proclaimed, if such a class had been marked off.

By the unquestioned letter of Scripture, by its pervading spirit, by the concurrent voice of Prophets, Evangelists, and Apostles; by promises, commands, entreaties; by the touching and solemn protestations of the Eternal that the ruin of the condemned does not originate in His will; by the texts we have quoted, by others almost innumerable, and by the total absence of opposing Scripture, we are thankfully persuaded that—**CHRIST DIED FOR ALL.**

1. Therefore, *all may be saved*. We cannot say that any man of our acquaintance must be lost. We ought not to feel as if it were so, or look on men as in a hopeless state. The Second Adam has “in all things the pre-eminence” over the first. We see, we acknowledge, that the influence of the first reaches every neighbour we have, ourselves, our children, all we know, all that are afar off, all that breathe—reaches them to deprave and inculpate them. “As by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of One the free gift came upon all men *unto justification of life.*” Let us seize upon this hope; let us feel that the saving power of the Second Adam, the Lord from heaven, who bought our race, reaches as far, as wide, as deep as the power of the first who fell. Let us look on the crowds that flit along the streets, and say, “They may be saved;” at the thoughtless swarms on the Sunday steamer, the sober multitudes who flock to church, the thieves in our prisons, the wealthy merchants, the light writers, the bitter politicians, and say ever, and repeat it, “They may be saved!”

Christian mother! Every one of thy children is bought with a price. Lonely Missionary! thy dark and uncouth hearer is one for whom Christ died. And thou, unhappy and unholy one, whose life has been one race of sin, thou mayst yet lift up that guilty head in the light of heaven, and sing the virtue of redeeming blood!

2. *If thou art not saved, the fault, the whole, the undivided fault, is thine.* If you do not escape, it is because you neglect so great salvation, not because the Saviour neglected you. If you never come to Christ, He will say, “I called, but ye refused.” If you never rejoice in His protection, He will say, “How often would I have gathered you even as a hen gathereth

her chickens under her wings, and *ye would not.*" And O! if at last you receive a portion with the unhappy, it will not be in a place prepared for *you*, but in "everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels." And even then He who delivered the sentence would behold your doom, not with the gratification of an avenger, but with the feeling of an upright Judge: "For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth," (mark, not merely "of the wicked," but of him that actually dieth,) "saith the Lord God: wherefore turn yourselves, and live."<sup>\*</sup> The salvation of the happy is all of God; the ruin of the lost is all their own.

3. *If Christ died for all, what ought Christians to do for all?* Shall souls perish? Souls for whom Christ died? If the Father spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all; and He, the Son of God, suffered it to be said, "He saved others, Himself He cannot save;" shall we sit still heedlessly while souls perish? Shall we not spend and be spent, count all things but loss, and patiently follow in the labouring footsteps of our Lord, if by any means we may save some? Shall we not feel a sacred horror lest through our fault or neglect our brother perish for whom Christ died?

*In the day of atonement shall ye make the trumpet sound throughout all the land.* This was the law of the Jubilee. In that year of redemption, the joyful sound, which told all who had lost an inheritance that it was restored, did not greet their longing ears till the atonement-day came round. The trump of Jubilee sounded forth from the great propitiation. Our day of atonement has come; the great offering is made; our High Priest has commanded the trumpet to sound through all the world. You and I, and our poor, and miserable, and blind, and naked brethren, may find "unsearchable riches." Sound forth the news. Heralds!

"Blow ye the trumpet, blow!"

But let your trumpet give no uncertain sound. Echo no note but what is in perfect concord with your inmost persuasion. "If thou believest with all thine heart" that Christ tasted death for every man, tell, O tell it out with heart and voice! But never, never raise in any mind of man a question

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\* Ezek. xviii. 32.

as to whether you are using words with double meaning, when offering salvation to all. When you are telling a sinner that he may be saved, and that if lost it will be by his own fault, not by God's appointment, it is no time to make him ask, Does he mean that? No plea could ever justify us in proclaiming heaven for all, when we believe it to be only for those who are sanctified by the blood of Christ. Nor could any plea justify us in proclaiming mercy for all, if we believed that many were without atonement, and, therefore, without the possibility of repentance, faith, or pardon. If you believe that some are left without these, say so; and proclaim mercy for the rest. If you doubt whether some are not so left, say so; and speak doubtfully. If you are "fully persuaded in your own mind," then lift up your voice like a trumpet, and with transparent honesty deliver to every man the invitation of your Lord, and, as far as lieth in you, compel them to come in.

He "gave Himself a ransom for all :" "The Lord laid on Him the iniquity of us all." This is the firm and broad foundation of our faith for national, wide-spread, universal revivals of religion, for the regeneration of our country, for the conversion of the world. We seek not a few; we seek as many as Jesus bought—all. We look each individual, each crowd, in the face, joyful in the possession of good news for all : "God having raised up His Son Jesus, sent Him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities." Glorious message for a crowd! Glorious feeling, that we have it to announce, without drawback, reserve, or second meaning! Then, on! brethren; on and be hopeful! Aim and labour for all. This will bring toil, and also reproach; but with such a Gospel to preach, with such a hope of results,—

"All hail reproach, and welcome shame!"

"For this cause," said a hard labourer for the conversion of the world, to whom we all owe much; "for this cause we both labour and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of *all men*, specially of those that believe."

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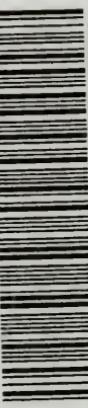
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